

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the courtesy of a telephonic interview on October 4, 2005 among Examiner Cam-Y Truong, Examiner Jean Corrielus, and Applicant's Attorney Jeffrey Klayman regarding the Office action dated July 5, 2005 and the draft proposed amendment submitted on September 30, 2005. Mr. Klayman explained that the proposed claim amendments are directed to the aspect of permitting users to define database structures including modifying database structures defined by other users. For example, users may be permitted to add, modify, and delete database structures, including adding a new field to a database or deleting an existing field from a database. Such user manipulation of database structures is unprecedented (database structures are generally pre-defined or managed by a database administrator in prior art databases), but is a driver of collaboration because it allows the users to collectively define the types of information to be included in the database. Mr. Klayman gave an example of a database of information about U.S. Presidents that may include fields for date of birth, place of birth, education, etc. A user might want the database to include additional information, such as Presidential nicknames or favorite foods. Rather than contacting a database administrator and waiting (or hoping) for the administrator to approve and effectuate the change, the user would simply add appropriate fields to the database, at which point other users could populate those fields so that the missing information is collectively added to the database.

It should be noted that a similar limitation had been included in claim 16 and had been rejected as being anticipated by Szlam. Mr. Klayman explained that Szlam does not describe user modification of database structures but rather describes modification of the contents of existing database structures. In at least this respect, Mr. Klayman submitted that the proposed claim amendments are allowable of the prior art of record.

Mr. Corrielus indicated that he and Examiner Truong would be willing to work with Applicant toward an allowance. Mr. Corrielus indicated that upon Applicant's submittal of a response, additional searching might be done, but, in any case, Applicant would be contacted before a next Office action is issued.

2. Claims 1-12 and 15-22 have been canceled and replaced with new claims 23-43.

3. New claim 23 requires, among other things, at least one process that permits users to define database structures including modifying database structures defined by other users. The Examiner had rejected a similar limitation in claim 16 as being taught by Szlam. Upon careful review of the Szlam reference, Applicant respectfully submits that the Szlam reference does not describe modification of database structures, as the Examiner suggests, but rather appears to describe techniques for updating existing databases and accessing information in multiple databases using the existing (and typically different) structures of the different databases (e.g., a first database might be accessed by an account number while a second database might be accessed by social security number). In Szlam, users can only view database fields that already exist. Szlam does not provide for modifying database structures such as, for example, by adding new structures and deleting existing structures defined by other users, but rather describes modifying the contents of existing database fields.

4. Because a dependent claim is deemed to include all limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims, dependent claims 24-43 are also believed to be in a form for allowance.

5. All pending claims are believed to be in a form suitable for allowance. Therefore, the application is believed to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicant respectfully requests early allowance of the application. The Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned, Jeffrey T. Klayman, if it will assist further examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey T. Klayman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey. T. Klayman
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 39,250

BROMBERG & SUNSTEIN LLP
125 Summer Street
Boston, MA 02110-1618
(617) 443-9292

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